

The Application Process for Well/Septic Permits and Certification Letters



Loudoun County Health Department
Division of Environmental Health

Key Characteristics of Permits and Certification Letters

Well Permits

- Valid for 12 months
- Transferrable
- Wells required to be drilled and tested prior to application for building
- After expiration, full fees required for reissuance.

Sewage Disposal Permits

- Valid for 18 months
- Nontransferable - transferee required to obtain new permit and pay applicable fees
- Issued when intending to build within 18 months
- After expiration, full fees required for reissuance
- Can be redeemed for a certification letter within 18 months with no fee

Certification letters

- No expiration date
- Transferrable & recordable on the deed
- Issued to delineate a drainfield site for future building
- A survey of the drainfield site is required prior to issuance
- Can be redeemed for a sewage disposal permit within 18 months at no additional fee
- After 18 months, full fee applies to issue sewage disposal permit
- Cannot be used to install a sewage disposal system

Making Application:

Application for both certification letters and permits must be complete prior to acceptance by this office for processing. All applications must include a detailed and accurate site plan.

The site plan may be hand-drawn but must be obtained from accurate field measurements. Site plans must be complete and contain the following information:

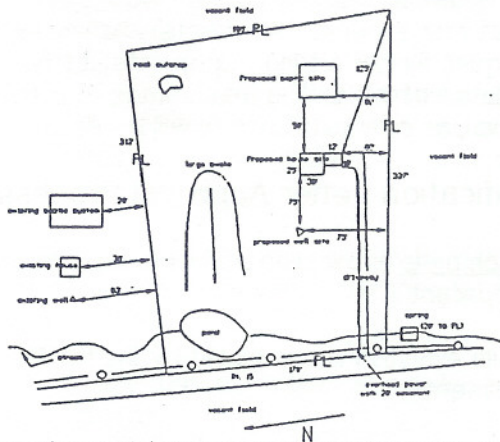
- ✓ Property lines with dimensions (copy of boundary survey preferred)
- ✓ Exact exterior dimensions and location (measurements to nearest property line) of all proposed structures including driveways and roads
- ✓ Exterior dimensions and location (measurements to nearest property line) of all existing structures
- ✓ Location (measurements to nearest property lines) of all wells, cisterns, springs, bodies of water and creeks within 200 feet of proposed house, well and sewage disposal system
- ✓ Location (measurements to nearest property lines) of proposed or existing easements, right of ways and utility lines (including poles)
- ✓ Approximate location of proposed sewage disposal system and well (exact location and dimensions required if site was previously certified by the Health Department)
- ✓ Location (measurements to nearest property line) of all existing sewage disposal systems including privies within 200 feet of the proposed house, well and sewage disposal system
- ✓ Location of drainage ways, swampy areas, rock outcrops, sinkholes, cutting, filling, dump sites, and fuel tanks on the property.

If any of the above items are absent or not applicable, a statement must be placed on the site plan specifying this.

All site plans must be signed and dated by the applicant/owner or legal agent.

Example: Site Sketch for Septic Application

There are no cisterns, swampy areas, sink holes, cutting, filling, or dumpsites on the property



Incomplete applications and site plans will not be accepted for processing. The application must be signed by the property owner or his/her agent.

If you do not intend to build on your property within 18 months, you should apply for a certification letter. Upon finding an adequate site, a certification letter from the Health Department approving a sewage disposal site will be issued. This letter is transferrable to other property owners, has no time limit and can be recorded with the deed of the property. All drainfield sites must be shown on a 1"= 200' scale survey plat prepared by a certified land surveyor prior to issuance.

If you do intend to construct a house within 18 months, you should apply for a septic construction permit and a well permit. A septic construction permit is valid for 18 months from date of issuance and is not transferrable. The septic construction permit does not convey with the property and the new property owner or applicant will be required to obtain a new permit and pay applicable fees.

Site visits:

Appointments: A site visit will be scheduled with you and the Environmental Health Specialist after your application is accepted. If you cannot keep your appointment, please contact us at least 24 hours prior to the appointment. When inclement weather forces us to cancel, we will notify you on the morning of your appointment. The applicant or their representative must be present for the site evaluation to address questions regarding property lines, existing sewage systems or water supplies within 200 feet of the area to be evaluated, proposed house site, underground utilities, easements and other issues relevant to the site.

Before the Appointment: All property lines must be clearly marked. All corners of the house site must be staked accurately. Deviation from this house location during construction will result in voiding of the sewage disposal construction permit. A proposed drainfield and well site must be selected.

These areas must be cleared of vegetation enough so that the topographic contour is easily visible. In cases where the property has a Health Department approved drainfield site and you are pursuing a construction permit on that site, you may be required to have a land surveyor field locate the site. Miss Utility must be contacted at 1-800-257-7777 resulting in all underground utilities located and clearly marked in all cases (except where a Health Department approved drainfield exists). The applicant may be required to supply a backhoe and operator in cases where soil evaluation work is required (all cases except where a Health Department certification letter exists). The Environmental Health Specialist will not perform the evaluation if you fail to complete all the above.

After all site work has been completed and all necessary information has been received, a construction permit or certification letter will be

issued if an acceptable site is found. If the application must be denied or additional information and time is required, you will be notified in writing.

Issuance of a Building Clearance:

The Department of Building and Development will not issue a zoning/building permit until your well has been drilled, chemically tested and approved by the Health Department and a valid septic construction permit has been issued. See the following process chart for well approval steps.

Construction of the sewage disposal system:

The construction of your sewage disposal system can proceed anytime after the issuance of the septic permit and prior to its expiration. It is strongly recommended that the well be drilled and tested to ensure adequate quality and quantity prior to construction of the drainfield, in case alternative well areas must be explored.

The sewage disposal system must be constructed by a licensed and bonded contractor or the owner of the proposed house. If the home owner wishes to install the system, an informal interview to discuss construction details and standards is required. Contact this office for further information.

Upon completion of your sewage disposal system, an Environmental Health Specialist will inspect the materials and installation. Additional fees may be required if reinspections are required.

Occupancy:

Final occupancy will not be granted by the Department of Building and Development without an operations permit issued by this office. Complete approval of the sewage

disposal system and a satisfactory bacteriological sample of the water is required to obtain the operations permit.

The bacteriological sample may be collected by this department after installation of the plumbing in the house or a private certified lab may be used at your expense. An unsatisfactory result will require further testing. Upon satisfactory completion of this testing and sewage disposal approval, an operations permit will be issued.

Certification Letter Approval Process

1. A complete application packet is submitted by the applicant
2. A site evaluation is conducted by the Health Department
3. If an approvable site is located, the applicant must have a surveyor develop a plat showing the approved site.
4. A certification letter is issued by the Health Department.

Septic and Well Approval Process

1. A complete application packet is submitted for septic and well construction permits. Applicant intends to begin building within 18 months.
2. A site evaluation is conducted by the Health Department.
3. If a site is approved, well and septic construction permits are issued.
4. Well Approval for Building Clearance
 - a. Well is drilled by a licensed well driller.
 - b. Well is inspected by the Health Dept.
 - c. A pump test by the driller or pump

installer is required if the flow is less than 5 GPM.

d. A water sample is collected for analysis for chemical contaminants by an approved driller or pump installer installer.

e. Results of the chemical analysis and data information on the pump test are evaluated by the Health Dept. prior to well approval.

5. The Health Dept. sends a letter to Building and Development authorizing clearance for a building permit.

6. The sewage disposal system is installed by a licensed installer.

7. The sewage disposal system is inspected by the Health Department.

8. Water is tested for potability by a certified laboratory or the Health Dept. after the plumbing is installed.

9. An operations permit is issued by the Health Department after final approval of the well and sewage disposal system.

**Loudoun County Health Dept.
Division of Environmental Health**

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